

VZCZCXRO4300
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #0755 0731817
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 131817Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6223
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000755

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/12/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ON GOI PLANS FOR REFUGEE
WORKING GROUP

REF: STATE 24289

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Ellen Germain for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. In a March 13 meeting, Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Haj Hamoud said that the Iraqi Ambassador in Amman would disburse the USD 8 million Iraq had pledged to help its refugees in Jordan within a day or two, but did not mention any additional GOI funding initiatives for refugees. He described GOI goals for the Refugee Working Group meeting next week in Amman in general terms; emphasized the need to begin thinking about IDP and refugee returnees; and said the GOI plans to convene a national conference on the subject later in the spring. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Deputy Foreign Minister Hamoud, who will lead the Iraqi delegation to the Refugee Working Group (RWG) meeting in Amman next week, told DepPolCounselor in a March 13 meeting that the GOI would transfer the USD 8 million it had pledged almost a year ago to help Iraq refugees in Jordan "within the next day or two" because it wants the transaction completed before the RWG. He confirmed that the transfer would be done by having the Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan hand the check to the UNHCR representative in the presence of a GoJ official. On additional GOI aid, Hamoud said he expects the USD 40 million that Iraq pledged to the World Food Program to be combined with the USD 8 million, but did not mention any other GOI aid initiatives in the pipeline. (Note: We will try to clarify whether he meant the USD 40 million might actually be transferred along with the USD 8 million. End Note.)

¶3. (C) Hamoud described GOI goals for the Amman meeting only in general terms: they want to assess results to date and discuss possible future action. Asked about the GOI-UNHCR/IMC (International Medical Corps) survey to assess the current conditions for return of IDPs and refugees, Hamoud said it was necessary to begin thinking about the needs of returnees and about preparations necessary for orderly return. DepPolCouns agreed, and noted that announcing the terms of the survey at the RWG would be a useful step. Hamoud said that Baghdad was the key to a return strategy both because it was home to the majority of IDPs and because shifting sectarian demographics had created property issues that, if left unresolved before large-scale returns, could lead to a new wave of violence, stating that "most homes" that IDPs fled are now occupied by others. He added that GOI hopes to convene, sometime after the April 22 Kuwait Expanded Neighbors Ministerial, a national conference in Baghdad involving all GOI and international players to discuss IDP and refugee issues, including returns.

¶4. (C) Hamoud said that the Iraqi delegation would meet later in the day to discuss strategy, and in a follow-up telephone call said they discussed the agenda and the national conference, but would offer no further specifics. The Iraqis expect to spend part of the day before the RWG in bilateral

talks with the Jordanians and UNHCR, and also want to meet with the U.S. delegation that day. The Iraqi delegation will include Director General Adel Qudeyr from the Ministry of Human Rights, Director General Ibrahim Mishkour from the Ministry of Interior, an as-yet unnamed representative from the Ministry of Migration; and from the MFA, Hamoud, Kassem Abdul Baki, Head of the MFA Legal Department, Senior Ad Hoc Mechanism Coordinator Mohammad al Humaimidi, and Ambassador Shukra Taha, Director for Neighbors Affairs.

CROCKER